THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) The Surface-to-Air Trishul Missile was flight tested on 28th and 29th January, 2002.

(b) Trishul with quick reaction time has a range of 9 km. It is a multi-role missile for all the three Services. The last test flight was conducted to establish command guidance system in a sea skimmer mode and the test demonstrated that the missiles hit the floating and simulated targets accurately.

Increasing budget grants for the Coast Guard

654. SHRI NANA DESHMUKH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the news-items captioned Coast Guard at Sea with scanty resources appearing in Hindustan Times dated the I st February, 2002;

(b) whether the Coast Guard Department has asked for increase in their budget grant in order to meet the increased responsibility for sea vigil over the next five years;

(c) if so, the details thereof; and

(d) the steps being taken by Government to augment their grant?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The Government is aware of the Budgetary requirements posed by the Coast Guard and would make appropriate provisions during the Xth Plan keeping in view the role envisaged for the Coast Guard and the resources available.

Pak UAVs shot down by India

655. SHRI K. RAMA MOHAN A RAO: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the total number of Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) belonging to Pakistan shot down by India during the last three years;

(b) whether it is also a fact that some of the Indian UAVs have also been shot down by Pakistan;

(c) if so, the details thereof;

(d) whether the DRDO's Nishant has undergone test flights; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No UAV of Pakistan has been shot down by India during the last 3 years.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Does not arise.

(d) and (e) DRDO's Nishant has undergone development trails towards meeting the general service qualification requirements (GSQRs) of the Army.

Blast in ordnance factory, Khamaria

656. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether a blast rocked the Ordnance Factory at Khamaria (M.R) on 7th January, 2002;

(b) if so, the causes of the blast and the devastation caused thereby; and

(c) the precautionary measures taken and proposed to be taken to prevent such blasts?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The exact causes of the blast are not known and the quantum of devastation not fully assessed. One building has been fully damaged and roof of few others damaged partially. A Board of Enquiry has been constituted to enquire into the causes, extent of damage/loss to the building and Government property and to suggest remedial measures. The Board of Enquiry has not yet submitted its report.

(c) After receipt of the report of the Board of Enquiry, suitable precautionary measures specific to the blast will be taken to prevent recurrence of such blasts.

Ammunition blasts near Bikaner

657. SHRJ KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have conducted any preliminary investigations into the cause of ammunition blasts near Bikaner as reported in all the leading newspapers on 12th January, 2002;